

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

080546Z Jun 05

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TAIPEI 002501

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/RSP/TC, EAP/PA, EAP/PD - ROBERT
PALLADINO
DEPARTMENT PASS AIT/WASHINGTON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [TW](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: Cross-Strait Relations, Taiwan's
Bid to Join WHO

SUMMARY:

1. Taiwan dailies June 8 focus their front-page news coverage on two main domestic political issues: a non-existent scandal made up by a city councilor, and the passage of constitutional amendments. The pro-independence "Liberty Times," Taiwan's largest daily, and the conservative, pro-unification "United Daily News" carried front-page reports on the apology of a city councilor who fabricated a scandal concerning mortuary offerings. Both newspapers covered the passage of constitutional amendments, too, but on their first inner pages. The centrist, pro-status "China Times" reserved its front-page banner-headline for the constitutional news: "The National Assembly Successfully Passed the Constitutional Amendments. Seats for Legislators Will Be Reduced in Half, Referendums Will Be Added to the Constitution." The pro-independence "Taiwan Daily" carried President Chen Shui-bian's plan to carry out a second stage reform in the Constitution after Chen knew the passage of the constitutional amendments. The banner-headline in its front page was "Bian: The Second Stage Constitutional Reform Would Solidify A New National Consensus."

2. In terms of editorials and commentaries, most of the ones published June 8 focus on President Chen Shui-bian's plan for a second stage of constitutional reforms. However, the pro-independence "Liberty Times" editorialized that the Taiwan people should know clearly that China is a terrorist country, and urged the Taiwan people not to accept the "1992 consensus" or the "One China" principle in order to protect Taiwan's sovereignty. The pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" carried a commentary written by Taiwan's Foundation of Medical Professionals Alliance President Wu Shuh-min. According to Wu, Taiwan's bid to join the WHO should allow the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Health to work more closely together. End Summary.

A) "Understand Clearly That China is A Terrorist Country That Aims At Expanding Its Military Buildup"

The pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 800,000] editorialized (6/8):

"The United States views China's military buildup the same as a terrorist threat. In other words, China's military threat has been viewed [by the United States] as being in the same category as Al Qaeda, led by Osama Bin Laden, and the lie of 'peaceful emergence' that China has been bragging about is inevitably unveiled [not to be true by the United States.]

"It is hard for one to imagine that political figures in the United States, Japan, and Europe are concerned more about China's military threat to Taiwan than some Taiwan politicians, who are under [the threat of] China's cannons. The essence of the Chinese authorities, to be frank, is that of a terrorist organization, and it is a rogue state. If someone dreams of recognizing 'the 1992 consensus,' 'the One China principle,' or even wants to pay a pilgrimage visit to China like KMT Chairman Lien Chan and PFP Chairman James Soong did, these actions are equal to recognizing Taiwan as a province of China. Once Taiwan loses its sovereignty, does it not mean to hand over Taiwan's security to terrorists? Can the Taiwan people accept that?"

B) "Taiwan's WHO Bid, Not Simply A Failure"

Taiwan's Foundation of Medical professionals Alliance President Wu Shuh-min wrote in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] (6/8):

"Still, since Taiwan needs to gain support from foreign countries during this process [of attending the WHO], our diplomats have a great opportunity to develop relationships with their foreign counterparts, rather than focusing only on unilateral relationships with the US and Japan. The

Department of Health (DOH) also repeatedly sent its officials to observe at WHO-related committees, and it now has a better understanding of international health cooperation.

"The experience of jointly pushing for participation in the WHO has allowed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the DOH to work more closely together. The public has also realized that Taiwan should not exclude itself from the global village, and is willing to offer more medical aid to developing countries. In the future, health, democracy and business diplomacy will become the three major pillars of Taiwan's international relations.

"Taiwan's frustrated bid to join the WHO was therefore not a failure. It opened up infinite possibilities for our diplomacy."

PAAL